



## Update for March 9, 2020

Justices, Judges, Circuit Court Clerks and Kentucky Court of Justice Personnel:

Kentucky's first cases of COVID-19 were confirmed this weekend in Harrison, Fayette and Jefferson counties. In light of Harrison County closing schools and the Harrison County Public Health Department recommending that people avoid crowds, I discussed the situation with the Harrison County judges and circuit court clerk. We decided to cancel today's District Court criminal docket so that we could assess the situation. We did not close the Harrison County Justice Center in Cynthiana.

Gov. Beshear and officials from the Kentucky Department for Public Health and Harrison, Fayette and Jefferson counties held a news conference this morning and I am impressed with their leadership and preparedness. Going forward, we will check the latest recommendations from the Department for Public Health and the Executive and Legislative branches to help us determine if docket cancellations or court closures are warranted.

We now have a [COVID-19 and the Courts](#) page on the Kentucky Court of Justice website where you can find the latest updates on the court system. In the meantime, here are some things you need to know:

### **What Employees Should Do If Sick**

We encourage employees who are sick to stay at home and take sick time to avoid spreading the illness.

The [Department for Public Health](#) has advised: "If you have developed a fever or respiratory symptoms and believe you have had exposure to a known case or traveled to an area with community spread, isolate yourself from others in your home and contact your healthcare provider or [local health department](#) to describe your symptoms and any recent travels before you go to the healthcare facility."

If you have other questions, you can call Kentucky's COVID-19 Hotline at 1-800-722-5725.

In the event of a courthouse closure, employees will be granted special leave and will not have to take sick time. For details, see Section 5.07 Court Closures Unrelated to Weather in the [Kentucky Court of Justice Personnel Policies](#).

### **Keep Court Spaces Clean & Practice Good Hygiene**

The AOC Department of Facilities will provide county officials with the [Centers for Disease Control environmental cleaning recommendations](#) to use when cleaning courthouses and judicial centers. It's also important for all of us to keep our workspaces clean and to take [preventive measures](#). Employees in leased office spaces should disinfect surfaces daily on days when janitorial providers are not scheduled.

### **Advice for Those Who Are Sick and Due in Court**

If you are contacted by someone who is sick and scheduled to appear in court, please direct them to the KCOJ's webpage on [COVID-19 and the Courts](#) for information about what to do if they have an attorney or are representing themselves.

### **Resources**

Below are links to several resources you might find helpful:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Kentucky Department for Public Health website: [COVID-19](#)
- Kentucky Court of Justice website: [COVID-19 and the Courts](#)

I appreciate the immediate and professional response from our state and local officials and I encourage each of you to take the necessary precautions and remain calm. By working together and staying informed, we can ensure that the state court system responds appropriately to the COVID-19 outbreak.

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